

learning, impulse control, stress reactivity, and more. Repeated drug exposure “resets” these circuits toward compulsive behavior so that a person’s control over the desire to seek and use drugs is compromised, despite devastating consequences.

Over the course of the last three decades, the scientific and medical communities have made amazing strides in the understanding and treatment of drug abuse and addiction. Combined biological, epidemiological, and social science discoveries have given us a detailed understanding of the risks, mechanisms, and consequences of drug abuse and addiction. Today, the rate of cigarette smoking in youth is at its lowest recorded point since tracking of teen drug use and attitudes began in 1975.

Marijuana use has shown a consistent decline since the mid-1990s, although that trend has flattened in recent years; a study released last month by NIDA found that daily use of marijuana among America’s youth is making a bold comeback—surpassing tobacco use.

Mr. Speaker, recent scientific advances have revolutionized our understanding of addiction as a chronic, relapsing, disease and not a moral failure. According to the NIDA scientists have now identified the specific sites of action in the brain where every major drug of abuse has its initial effects, including opiates, methamphetamine, cocaine, tobacco, and marijuana. Brain imaging technology has demonstrated that addiction is a brain disease by delineating profound disruptions in the specific brain circuits affected by addiction. In-depth, NIH-supported studies of chronic drug exposure confirmed that by causing abnormal regulation of key brain receptor, addictive drugs modify the strength of connections between neurons. The scientific knowledge we have accumulated will be used to transform the way we treat addiction and how we prevent drug abuse and its escalation to addiction. Neuroscientists are working to identify the genetic and environmental factors that put people at risk. For instance, genes account for about 50 percent of a person’s risk of becoming addicted, and environmental factors influence the effect of these genes. Progress in genetics research will lead to more refined prevention and treatment interventions targeted to individual risk or to modifiable environmental influences.

Now, it’s time for our policies to catch up with the research findings. We have to understand that addiction is a treatable disease requiring continuing care and multifaceted approaches, like diabetes, or heart and respiratory disease. We have to continue to support the research advancements by investing in a strong, sustainable research funding platform for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) that will bring us further in understanding and treating drug abuse and addiction. Failure to properly address this growing problem will only lead to more lives ruined or extinguished by drugs, more families broken by abuse, and more taxpayer money squandered on ineffective programs.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brain Awareness Week, which exposes our constituents to the wonders and mysteries of the brain. I also ask that you join me in continuing to support basic research funded through the NIH and NSF that provides a foundation for new addiction treat-

ments and drug abuse prevention methods that have an enormous impact on the lives of millions of Americans.

ROTA CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES STUDY ACT

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing the Rota Cultural and Natural Resources Study Act. The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating certain areas of prehistoric, historic, and natural significance on the island of Rota in the Northern Mariana Islands as a unit of the National Park System.

Rota is truly a “jewel,” as the gentlewoman from California, Ms. NAPOLITANO, called the island at last year’s hearing on this same bill. National Park Service representatives who conducted a reconnaissance survey there in 2004 reported that Rota has the best-preserved village sites of the ancient Chamorro people and that Rota’s native limestone forests provide habitat to locally and federally protected, rare bird species.

The House of Representatives approved the Rota Park study under suspension of the rules in July last year. There was no objection or controversy. But, unfortunately, the other body did not have time on its agenda to act before the 111th Congress ended.

Now, I ask that we quickly restart the process of having the Park Service study the suitability and feasibility of designating parts of Rota for a national park.

There are time pressures involved. Rota is at a crossroads. Major land use changes are possible resulting from development by the U.S. military on the neighboring island of Guam. We have to know which areas on Rota can be and need to be protected, so that the people of Rota can maintain the important cultural and natural features of their island while at the same time taking advantage of opportunities for economic development.

For these reasons the leaders of Rota support the study. The Honorable Teresita Santos, Rota’s representative in the Northern Mariana Islands House of Representatives, flew to Washington, DC to speak in support of the bill at the hearing by Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oceans, Wildlife and Insular Affairs last year.

The Mayor of Rota, the Honorable Melchor Mendiola, submitted his letter for the record during last year’s consideration of the bill in the House. He, too, supported passage.

Today, I am including another letter of support for the study bill. This letter is from the Honorable Paul S. Manglona, President of the Northern Mariana Islands Senate, who represents Rota in the Senate.

And, of course, the National Park Service reconnaissance survey also recommended that the cultural and natural resources are truly of national significance and that the appropriate next step is a suitability and feasibility study.

The people of Rota have done a tremendous job over the millennia in protecting the treasures of their remarkable island. Let us

support their efforts. Let us determine whether this “jewel” should be considered by Congress for inclusion in the National Park System.

I ask that my colleagues support the Rota Cultural and Natural Resources Study Act.

THE SENATE,
NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH
LEGISLATURE,
Saipan, MP, March 15, 2011.

Hon. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
Delegate, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN, I am writing to support the Rota Cultural and Natural Resources Study Act (Act). The Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability of designating prehistoric, historic and limestone forest sites on Rota as a unit of the National Park System.

As testified to by Commonwealth Legislator Representative Teresita Santos for the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs, the Island of Rota is unique in the Marianas as the only primarily inhabited island spared fighting during World War II. Consequently, plant and animal life was spared the near total destruction similar on Saipan and Tinian.

Archaeologists describe Rota as having the most intact and numerous historic sites of any island in the Mariana Archipelago. Rota has the best examples in the Marianas of Latte houses, the ancient stone houses of the Chamorro culture. Four prehistoric sites on Rota are included in the Register of Historic Places, Monchon Archeological District, Taga Latte Stone Quarry, the Dugi Archeological Site, and the Chugai Pictograph Cave containing examples of ancient Chamorro rock art.

In addition to prehistoric sites, historic relics from the Japanese period—on the Historic Register of Historic Places—include Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha Sugar Mill, Japanese Coastal Defense Gun and the Japanese Hospital.

Natural resources are prevalent on Rota primarily due to its native limestone forests that provide habitat for federally endangered listed species including the Mariana crow and the Rota bridled white-eye birds, in addition to two (2) plant species endemic to Rota.

The National Park Service completed a preliminary resource assessment regarding Rota in 2005, concluding designating Rota as part of the national park system appeared to be the best way to ensure the long term protection of Rota’s pre-historic and historic natural and man-made habitat and structures. I strongly encourage you, along with the Rota Legislative Delegation, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability of designating prehistoric, historic and limestone forest sites on Rota as a unit of the National Park System.

Sincerely,
PAUL A. MANGLONA,
Senate President.

CONGRATULATING MR. RICHARD ORNELLAS FOR HIS COMMITMENT TO THE CLOSE UP WASHINGTON CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2011

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richard Ornellas, an outstanding